

# THE LEISURE HOUR.

BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,  
AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND.—Cowper.



AFTER THE FUNERAL.

## NINE-TENTHS OF THE LAW.

CHAPTER V.—THE "NEW MAN."

Horrible discord! The madd'ning wheels  
Of brazen chariots rag'd. Dire was the noise.

—Milton.

THERE was a larger congregation than usual at the parish church of Dulborough on the Sunday which followed the funeral. The pulpit and reading-desk were hung with black, as was also the great

square pew in which Squire Thornton had been used to sit, almost as regular an attendant in his place as the vicar and the clerk were in theirs. It was expected of course that a funeral sermon would be preached.

The vicar had made some brief allusion to the suddenness of the late squire's death on the previous Sunday, but the event had then been too recent and the preacher had been too much affected to allow of his saying much. Now the funeral was over, and those

who had followed their old friend and landlord to the grave were assembling with the usual badges of mourning about them, and greeting each other quietly and sadly as they met at the church gate. Those who came first went, before the service began, to look at the old massive tomb which had been so recently opened and closed again, and in which the remains of one whose well-known form they should behold no more was quietly reposing.

Few words were spoken, for country people of the labouring class are not apt at expressing their feelings; perhaps it should rather be said that they do express them by look and gesture, and by an occasional brief utterance, more forcibly and truly than some others who have more words at their command and less hesitation in using them.

The villagers went and looked at the great sarcophagus, and read the names and honours of those who had been laid from time to time upon the stone shelves within, scanning with a peculiar interest the blank space which remained alone (as if the page had been adjusted beforehand to the history) for him whose family name and lineage were now extinct.

The group around the church door stood aside when they saw Arthur Neville approaching. Most of them took off their hats in token of their sympathy, but with natural good taste they avoided looking at him; and quietly acknowledging their salutation, he passed through the midst of them and entered the church.

The good people were not disappointed as to the sermon. It was not often, indeed, that the vicar preached what could be called a funeral discourse, but the present occasion was one in which they were all so deeply concerned, that he could not pass it over. Sermons, he said, were for instruction of the living, not for praise of the dead. He would have all members of his congregation make their own funeral sermons while they were yet living, by their good and charitable life and conversation. The friend whom they had lost had done this effectually. He could not say any more good of him than they knew already, but there was One above who had taken note of many things which they could not see. The faith, the piety, the Christian love which were the source and cause of every good and charitable act, these were best known to Him who seeth in secret. Still there were lessons to be learnt from what they had seen themselves of their lost friend, both from his life and from his death. From his death, which was so sudden that unless he had lived in a state of preparation for it in dependence on his Saviour, he could not have been ready when called. Let them be ready also, having their lamps trimmed and their lights burning; for in a day and an hour when they knew not their Lord might come. And from his life, which also might teach them something; not as if any man were perfect, but, inasmuch as he had followed the higher example of his Lord, they might tread the same path and press forward to the same end.

"I never did," said the preacher, "and never will, gild a rotten post or paint a tottering wall, and such are we all, even at the very best. True praise is not of men, but of God; and whatever is good in us and worthy of praise, that also is from God, and we must praise Him for it. But you knew our brother, and if I speak of his good example it is that you may equal it, if you will, and go beyond

it if you can. In one respect, at least, I held him up to you as worthy of your imitation: he was always to be found in his place in God's house. Wet or dry, in summer or winter, he never failed to come here twice a day, bringing his friends and household with him. He lived much farther from the church than many of you, and yet it may be he was nearer to God. He came on foot always, as you know, because he would not hinder his servants of their church-going nor even his horses of their rest. Thus he kept God's Sabbaths and revered His sanctuary."

The good vicar had arrived at this point when a sound like the rumbling of wheels made itself heard in the distance. It evidently attracted his attention as well as the attention of his hearers. They had been listening to him with the deepest interest, and in perfect silence, and that silence was maintained while the sound without grew louder and more distinct. The cracking of a whip was also heard, and the clattering of horses' iron-shod hoofs upon the road. The vehicle approached the church-door, which stood wide open, and passed it without slackening speed. Those who sat nearest the door turned their heads, and then looked inquiringly at each other. A poor idiot, who went by the name of Billy Fidd, rose from his feet, and, pointing towards the road, looked up with eyes wide open at the vicar, and was on the point of speaking to call his attention, when a neighbour promptly put a hand before his mouth and another upon his shoulders and forced him to resume his seat. The school children were all in excitement, looking through the window from their point of vantage in the gallery, and whispering to one another. Presently the sound died away in the distance, and ceased as gradually as it had begun.

By this time the preacher had lost the thread of his discourse, and it did not seem as if he could find it again. He, too, had caught a glimpse of something through the window by the side of his pulpit, and it had disturbed his thoughts. Even the noise of the wheels and the cracking of the whip would have been enough to do that. He was accustomed to have it all his own way in the pulpit. If a child cried it was always carried out or brought at once to order by the schoolmistress. He was patient enough under such slight disturbances, and would wait till they were quieted, and go on afterwards without having lost an idea or a word. He had a wonderful memory, the people used to say; and certainly if he learnt his sermons by heart, as they seemed to think, his powers in this respect must have been remarkable. But now he was evidently distracted and annoyed. He could not collect his thoughts nor find the right place in his memory; neither could he again fix the attention of his hearers; they, like himself, were excited. He closed his sermon, therefore, more abruptly than he would otherwise have done on an occasion of such importance, and his congregation went their ways home.

Arthur Neville also returned as quickly as he could to Thickthorn. On arriving at the lodge he found the gate thrown wide open, and could see the marks of horses' hoofs upon the road leading up to the Hall. He hastened on, and when he had mounted the hill and emerged from the avenue of trees through which the house was approached, he discovered a carriage with a pair of horses and a postilion at the door. The horses were covered with foam, and the postilion was standing by their side wiping his forehead.

Arthur concluded, of course, that his brother had arrived. It was in accordance with the habits and ideas which he had picked up during his residence on the Continent that he should travel on Sunday as on any other day. It seems, indeed, to be the fashion with our neighbours across the Channel to choose the first day of the week, which is appointed by Divine goodness as a day of rest for man and beast, in preference to any other day for their expeditions. Henry Neville showed himself independent of the traditions and customs of his own country by driving past the churchyard in which the old squire had just been laid to rest, and the church in which the people who had so long worshipped with him were listening to the preacher's recognition of his Christian life and example, without slackening speed or manifesting any token of respect, either for the living or the dead.

"It was almost as bad," the vicar said to his wife, "as when Tullia ordered the charioteer to drive over the dead body of her father as it lay exposed and mutilated in the streets of Rome. He did not wish to be severe, but, perhaps, considering that they were living in a Christian country, it was even worse."

The door of the house stood wide open, like the gate, and Arthur heard his brother's voice disturbing the echoes of the almost vacant house before he himself could enter it. A girl from the kitchen had opened the door for him, and he wanted to know where all the servants were gone. They were at church she told him; Mr. Arthur had desired them to go as usual. He did not seem pleased with the information; but, turning round, saw his brother Arthur before him, and hastened to meet him, holding out his hand.

Henry Neville was at this time about twenty-five years of age, but looked much older. Arthur, who had not seen him for nearly three years, might have been excused if he had failed at first sight to recognise him, his face being half concealed by his beard, whiskers, and moustache. The mass of dark hair upon the lower part of the face only served to render the pallor and leanness of the cheeks and forehead more conspicuous, and his eyes looked sunken in his head and wanting in brightness. There was, however, no lack of animation in his speech and manner, and he seemed glad to see his brother again, and shook hands with him warmly. He alluded only in few words to the occasion which had brought him with as little delay as possible, he said, from the Continent. His uncle's death had been a great shock to him, of course, coming so suddenly; but at his time of life it was only what might have been expected. He was an old man. We could not expect to live for ever, any of us.

"No," said Arthur; "not in this world, at all events."

"I understand there is no will," Henry remarked, disregarding his reply.

"We shall hear all about that in due course," Arthur replied.

"I shall be glad to have something to eat," said his brother, changing the subject. "What time is luncheon ordered?"

Luncheon, or rather dinner—for Arthur had arranged to dine early on Sundays, following his uncle's well-known custom—was served presently; and as soon as the servant had left the room, Henry Neville began again to ask questions about the late

squire's will. He had received some information on the subject already, but wanted further particulars. He was not sure that he should have come home in such a hurry but for that. It had been very inconvenient to him, but business must be attended to.

Arthur told him briefly how matters stood. He would have preferred to postpone the entire question, with the discussion which ensued upon it, to another day, but Henry would not allow it.

By-and-by the distant church bell was heard, and Arthur got up.

"Will you come with me to church, Henry?" he said.

"I think not," the other answered, in a very decided tone. "You are not going *again*, are you?"

"Yes."

"No; don't. Stay with me this afternoon. There is so much to be said and done. I have so many questions yet to ask."

"They will keep, Henry; and this is not quite the day for them."

"Stuff! As if one day were any better than another! But I beg your pardon; you know my way."

"And you know our dear old uncle's way. Pay him this respect for once, Henry; let us go to church together, and visit his tomb afterwards."

"I couldn't; I really couldn't. Go to church! I have not done such a thing since—since I don't know when. I am not what I ought to be, Arthur, I know, but I can't play the hypocrite."

"Let me go, at all events."

"Well, if you choose to do so, I can't help it. I know what I shall do in that case."

"What?"

"I shall order the carriage and drive over to Nobottle and see Fellowes. There are horses in the stable, I suppose?"

"Yes; but they never go out on Sunday."

"I'll see about that."

"Fellowes will not talk business to you to-day if you go to him."

"I'll see about that also. I want to know how I stand."

"Well," said Arthur, after thinking for a few moments, "I'll stay at home with you if you like."

"Don't let me hinder your devotions. I think I shall go and see Fellowes, at all events. I'll be back in time for dinner."

"We have dined," said Arthur.

"Oh, have we? That's another reason for going, then. Adieu. Bon soir. We shall meet at breakfast-time to-morrow morning, if not sooner." And waving his hand to his brother, he left the room.

The congregation was again disturbed that afternoon by the rattling of wheels. But it was rather with a sense of relief than otherwise that the people listened to it this time. Mr. Henry Neville had been and was gone again; that was the general belief. He had found out pretty soon that Thickthorn was not for him. They hoped they should see no more of him. It was all a false alarm which they had heard about his having the property and turning Mr. Arthur out. Mr. Arthur was there, in the late squire's pew, the family pew. They could not see his face, because of the curtain which he had drawn before him, as was natural; but they knew he was there, sitting in the very corner which the old squire had occupied. They did not want any one



else there, since they could not have the squire himself back again. Things would go on under Mr. Arthur pretty much as they had done before, no doubt. They knew him, and he knew them. As for the brother, he was gone off as quickly as he came, and they hoped he might never come back. They ought not to have been occupied with such thoughts in church, but they could not help it. Even the vicar was again rather rambling in his discourse that afternoon. It would have been surprising if he had not been so. It is not easy to preach with earnestness and animation to a congregation whose minds are preoccupied; and Henry Neville, who never went to church himself, had succeeded, for the second time that day, in stealing away the thoughts of those among the Dulborough people, who were more devoutly and religiously disposed.

The worst of it was that, late at night, the sound of horses' hoofs and carriage wheels, and the cracking of a whip, were heard again on the road, and roused many of the villagers from their sleep with the unpleasant conviction that Henry Neville was not gone after all.

"He's back again, for sartin," said the old clerk to his wife, waking her up from her first and "beauty" sleep. "Nobody else but him would go tearing through the village on a Sunday evening after this sort of way. He's back again, worse luck, like a bad farthing. If this is the way he goes on of a Sunday, what will he do in the place on week-days, I wonder? It's a good thing the poor old squire can't hear him. Ah, well-a-day!"

"Never mind," his wife answered, sleepily; "Sabbath-breaking won't thrive. It's a bad beginning; but it will be all the better for us in the end. He won't have Thickthorn for his own with these doings; and if he have it, he won't keep it long. 'A Sabbath profaned, whatso'er may be gained, is a certain forerunner of sorrow;' that's for he. He may break the Sabbath as much as he pleases for anything I care. It's all in our favour; and his brother will be the better for it."

It was not a charitable or pious sentiment exactly, nor such as a thoughtful Christian would have uttered. But there was a certain rude and simple faith about it which commended it much to her husband's approbation.

"Yes," he said, "Henry Neville is not likely to prosper with such goings-on as these. That's a consolation, that is. Amen, say I."

Henry Neville returned to Thickthorn Hall on Sunday evening no wiser than when he left it. Mr. Fellowes refused to enter into any discussion with him on the business which had brought him there. He promised to ride over to Thickthorn as soon as he should have received the opinion on the case which he expected. In the meantime he could not be persuaded to give any information or advice on the subject. There was nothing urgent about the matter, he said; if there had been, he would have gone into his office without hesitation, and done what was necessary; but he would not meddle with worldly business on Sunday unless there was a valid reason for it. After all, Mr. Arthur was his client, not Mr. Henry; and he must have Mr. Arthur's authority for any communications he might make to any one else. He hoped the brothers would be able to arrange their difficulty satisfactorily; but nothing could be done until he had heard from London.

Two or three days later Mr. Fellowes drove up to the door, having written previously to make an appointment; and after a short consultation with his client, the opinion from London was produced and read. It did not amount to much. There were so many "ifs" and "buts" that the whole question seemed to be left in as much uncertainty as before. It is unnecessary to follow the legal argument. The gist of it was that if the purport and intentions of the will could be ascertained, there need be no difficulty in acting upon it: the interlineations and erasures would not necessarily destroy it or revoke it, as a whole; but if not, it would be otherwise. If the alterations had been made before the execution of the will (which everybody knew they had not), then such and such things would follow; but if afterwards, then the case would be different. If they had been made under certain conditions, and with intent to revoke (which nobody could know anything about), then the will would be invalid; but if under certain other conditions, and without such intention, then it would hold good. If the claimant, Arthur Neville, could show that the property was devised to him by this will, and that it had been duly executed and attested, then he might claim it for his own; but if the obliterations were so great that the meaning of the testator could not be ascertained, then the heir-at-law would be entitled to it. If collateral evidence could be produced, it would be useful to prove intention; but if not, it would be of no use at all. If the draft could be found it would be very important; but if not, nothing could be done with it. Cases were brought forward in confirmation of each of the above important "ifs" and "buts," but the case in which they were themselves most interested was left where it was.

"What is to be done?" Arthur inquired, when they had come to the end of this opinion, and had discussed the bearings of it on both sides. "What is to be done?"

Mr. Fellowes did not reply. Henry Neville also was silent.

"What are we to do, Mr. Fellowes?" Arthur inquired, for the third time.

"I must have some conversation with you on that point," said Fellowes, intimating that he must advise with him in private.

"Perhaps I had better explain my own views and intentions," Henry Neville said, at length. "It may save trouble. I have consulted my solicitors, Messrs. Ferrett and Holdem, and have this morning received a letter from them which seems more to the point than your 'opinion.' I'll read it to you.

"Thickthorn and Dulborough Estates.

"DEAR SIR,—In reply to your letter of yesterday's date, we have no hesitation in advising you that, assuming that the circumstances are exactly as you have stated them, you are the present possessor in law of these estates. If Mr. Arthur Neville can show that the will under which he claims is a valid document, and that the purport of it is as he would represent it, he will of course lose no time in doing so. But the burden of proof, *onus probandi*, lies with him. Your title is good till he can show a better. We will do all that is necessary in your behalf, and if an attempt should be made to prove the will in question will take the proper steps to defend your title. In the meantime, we repeat you are in possession—"

"I need not read the rest," Henry Neville said—"it's only about a steward whom they want to recommend to manage the property."

"You have been very prompt," Mr. Fellowes said, after a few moments. "We understand, then, that you claim to be in possession?"

"I am in possession," Henry Neville answered, "both legal and actual. And possession, you are aware, is nine-tenths of the law."

After that Arthur Neville and his solicitor withdrew, and held a consultation together. The law was as Henry's solicitors had stated it. It was for Arthur to decide what effort should be made to maintain what he conceived to be his right under the will.

The end of it was that he resolved for the present to do nothing. Mr. Fellowes was to make every effort to strengthen his case by the discovery of evidence, and a fresh search was to be made for the draft of the will. It must depend upon the success which might attend these efforts, and upon the course of events generally, whether or not it might be worth while for Arthur to risk the money he possessed in

the certain expense and uncertain issue of a law suit. He was anxious to return at once to the University, and to apply himself to his studies there. He had been reading closely, and the result of his efforts would now be of much more importance to him than he had at one time anticipated. He resolved to dismiss the whole affair as much as possible from his mind, and to give himself heartily and wholly to the work he had to do in qualifying himself, first for his degree at college, and subsequently for a profession by which to earn his livelihood.

He parted from his brother on friendly terms. He could not feel very cordially towards him; but he tried to think that Henry was acting only with common fairness and justice in claiming the estate. Ninety-nine persons out of a hundred would probably have done the same under similar circumstances. He wished he had been treated with more confidence and friendship; but he could not say that he had any just ground of complaint against his brother; and though grievously disappointed at the course events were taking, he must make the best of it. Time and patience might make all clear.

## THE BELLS OF ST. GILES'S, EDINBURGH.

THE grand old cathedral of St. Giles's, Edinburgh, has been undergoing for many years a gradual renovation. We are not going to describe the changes and improvements in the building, but confine our attention to the venerable tower, and especially to the bells which are enclosed in the spire. This spire, rising in the shape of an imperial crown from the massive tower, and standing out in bold relief against the sky, near the centre of the long range of buildings cresting the ridge from the Castle to the Canon-gate, forms the most conspicuous and striking feature in the picturesque old town.

We hope that no repair or restoration will be needed for generations to come in the grand old tower of St. Giles's. But it seems that the bells are in a condition little worthy of the history or the site of the cathedral. A letter from Sir William Chambers lately called attention to what he calls "their generally dilapidated condition." As Lord Provost of the city, he had well known the facts of the case, and, as a good citizen and patriotic Scotchman, he has generously undertaken the restoration of the bells. We quote part of his letter in the "Scotsman" newspaper:—

"Some time ago I caused a careful examination to be made regarding the number and state of the bells, the result being some very sorrowful disclosures. The large bell, which is rung for public worship, is a recast of an old bell of date 1460, which, according to Dr. Laing, bore a Latin inscription terminating in these words: 'Defunctos plango; vivos voco; fulmina frango;' signifying, 'I mourn the dead,' which refers to the solemn sounds of the passing-bell on the occasion of a death; 'I summon the living,' which means the call to church or to arms; 'I disperse the thunder,' which refers to the old superstitious belief that thunder could be dispersed by making loud noises with bells.

"The only bell in St. Giles's that has survived the

Reformation times is that smaller bell, without rope or clapper, which hangs dismally in a dark corner of the steeple. It bears an invocation to the Virgin Mary in Latin, with the date 1504. According to tradition, it was the Vesper bell of St. Giles's, but also most probably it was employed as the Ave, or preparatory, bell, tolled to call worshippers to a preparatory prayer before the larger bell rung for public worship. The ringing of what is now called the 'warning bell' on Sunday mornings may be traced to this ancient practice. This old Vesper bell of St. Giles's, hanging dumb in its melancholy seclusion, must be deemed a curious archaeological relic, and we may hope that its voice, after the lapse of centuries, will again some day be heard for a useful purpose in the city. As regards the twenty-three music bells and the set of eight chime bells, we may also hope they will experience a revival to the general entertainment of the citizens. On learning the sad condition of these several bells I made up my mind to be at the cost of setting them to rights as soon as the more onerous work of restoring the ancient building was completed. But more is required than this. Provision would need to be made under some public authority to ring and keep the bells in good condition in perpetuity. I have no doubt that as a consequence of measures that will soon come under consideration, this much-required reform in the bells will be satisfactorily adjusted."

Of the bells referred to in this letter, "the music bells" have most interest to old Edinburgh citizens. It was the custom, even down to the time of some now living, for all the shops to be closed and business suspended for an hour, and dinner was eaten to the accompaniment of the merry tunes of the carillons, or music bells.\*

\* About fifty years ago the writer of this note knew well Mr. Macleod, who was the player, and more than once ascended the tower with his then music master, and was allowed to play a tune.—ED. "Leisure Hour."

The tunes played were all old Scotch ones, such as "Wooded and married and a'," "Cauld Kail in Aberdeen," "The Blue Bells of Scotland," "There grows a bonny brier-bush in our kail Yard," "There's nae luck about the house," etc., all quickly played, and finished off with "God save the Queen."

The present performer is Miss Macleod, daughter of their ancient player. Year after year this lady has made the daily ascent—Sundays excepted—of the steep spiral stairs leading to the steeple, about the hour of one, in order to perform on the time-honoured bells, "for the pleasure and solacement of the citizens." She is now no longer young, and the ascent being deemed highly dangerous in stormy weather, the inhabitants of Edinburgh last winter were for a time deprived of their pleasant music.

The name of an older player has been recorded by Maitland, who in his "History of Edinburgh" says, "James Fife plays the musical bells therein (St. Giles's), than which probably none are better; for by their melodious harmony they captivate the ear and charm the hearer, though defective in number; to which if there were added a few bells of a deeper note they would be rendered a complete set, and perhaps would equal, if not excel, every set of this kind elsewhere."

It seems that there are or were two sets of bells in the tower, the *Girlie* and the *Macleod*, the latter so named after the man who so long played. Of the former set the history is curious. An ancient councillor named *Girlie*, being anxious that the town should possess a really fine set of chimes or bells, kept begging and entreating of the corporation to secure one he had seen in England, and which he assured his brothers in office would be heard all over the city. Either wearied out by his importunities, or led away by his description, they at length consented, and the said bells made their appearance. Once fitted up and finished, the council were invited to see and to hear them, when, to the amazement of all assembled, they could not distinguish one tune from another. An inspection having been made, it was discovered that the bells had been fitted up like a barrel-organ, to be driven by two men; and the barrel, instead of being a built-out one, was composed of a solid log. This had shrunk in such a manner that the operation of ringing or grinding was most dismal, and the metal of which the bells were made being steel, and very thin, they had no sound whatever. After this first and last trial of their powers, the "*Girlie Bells*" were, and still are, indignantly shelved—"silent and set aside."

The "*Macleod*" are feeble in their tone, the larger bells measuring about fourteen inches, and the smaller four. They are not heard at any great distance from St. Giles's. Their range is two octaves, from C to C, and they are of the Dutch or Netherlands type of carillons, *i.e.*, they are played like a pianoforte, by keys connected with the bells by bands or cords.\*

The keys on which the treble notes depend are struck by the hands edgeways, the little finger of the player being defended by a thick leathern stall. It requires considerable strength as well as celerity and skill in the player, for unless a violent blow is given to the key, only a weak sound is produced.

The bells of St. Giles's have no pedals such as belong to the Dutch carillons, and which communicating with the larger bells form the bass notes.

Leaving the musical bells, some historical notes about the older bells may interest Edinburgh readers.

In the Council Records, 20th July, 1554, there is an Act anent the bells by which it is declared that the sacristan was not only "to find stringes to all the Bellis inwith the steeple but siclik to water and soup (sweep) the queir (choir) once every oulk (week); and further that in all tymes cuming the grete Bellis be nocht rung fra the ten houris at even-guhill fyve houris in the mornying." Seven hours of quiet for sleep the citizens demanded.

In the year 1473, or thereabouts, was placed in the steeple of St. Giles's the greater "*Marie Bell*," which must have been heard on many memorable occasions, such as when, after a night of "woeful presage," there came the disastrous news of the defeat at Flodden, when—

"Rang out wi' clang and mane,  
Clang after clang frae Sanct Giles's tower,  
Where the fretted ribs like a bourtrees bower  
Make a royal crown o' stane—"

Then, as Professor Aytoun finely expresses it, at the tolling of the bell:—

"All is terror and confusion  
Till the Provost rises up.

All so stately from his sorrow  
Rose the old undaunted chief,  
That you had not deemed to see him,  
His was more than common grief.

"Rouse ye, sirs," he said, "we may not  
Longer mourn for what is done,  
If our king be taken from us  
We are left to guard his son.

Let them cease that dismal knelling,  
It is time enough to ring  
When the fortress-strength of Scotland  
Stoops to ruin like its king.

Let the bells be kept for warning,  
Not for terror or alarm;  
When they next are heard to thunder  
Let each man and stripling arm."

This bell was cast in Flanders, and is described as having the arms of Guelderland upon different parts, and curiously ornamented with the figures of the Virgin and Child, and other devices, together with a Latin inscription, ending with the phrases quoted in the letter of William Chambers.

In a satirical poem of the reign of James IV, a dwarf is introduced, saying to the burghesses of Edinburgh,—

"I come amang ye heir to dwell,  
Fra sound of Sanct Giles's bell  
Never think I to fle."

The "*Reformation of Religion*" being far advanced in Edinburgh, the jewels, plate, vestments, and other treasures and trinkets belonging to St.

\* See an article on Carillon Playing in the "*Leisure Hour*" for 1877, with a picture of the player at Flushing, in Holland, as sketched by the accomplished artist Robert Pritchett.



Giles's Church being deemed no longer necessary in spiritual affairs, they were ordered to be delivered to the Town Council of the city. And on the 8th of May, 1560, the Council understanding that the Kirk might be "servit with three Bells, one rung to the Prayers, ane uther for serving of the knock (clock), and the third to be the common Bell," the Dean of Guild was ordained to "tak down the Mary Bell," and to keep the same till he received further instructions. Accordingly, on the 26th of the same month, it was resolved in Council that the said bell and the brazen pillars within the church be converted into artillery for the use of the town, and be sent for that purpose to Flanders if this could not "be gudlie done in this country."

This resolution, however, was altered the year after, when the bell called the Marie Bell, with the brazen pillars, amounting to 218 stone weight, were sold by warrant of the Council to one Adam Fullerton, "in respect he had been the highest bidder after they had several times been put to roup (auction) through the town." The sum received for the articles thus disposed of was £240. One of the Abbey Church bells was put in place of the Marie Bell.

In the year 1621, three bells were made at Camphire, in Holland, we are told, for the use of the town, "two whereof for St. Giles's Church, and the third for the Netherbow Part, the largest weighing 2,150 pounds, the second 768 pounds, and the smallest 520 pounds, all Dutch weight." These cost the sum of £1,443 15s. Scottish money, besides the old bells or metal sent to be recast.

In 1681 the town of Edinburgh "obtain ane Act anent Moodie's legacy and mortification to them of 20,000 marks, that in regard they have no use for a church (which was the end for which he destined it) that they might be allowed to convert it to some other public work, such as 'buying with it a pele (peal) of bells to hang in St. Giles's steeple, to ring musically, and warne us to the church', also to build a new Tolbooth above the West Part of Edinburgh, and to put Thomas Moodie's name and arms thereon," etc., etc.

But these proposals and the Bishop of Edinburgh's request to have the 20,000 marks allowed him for the erection of a chapel and lodging for himself were finally not sanctioned, as it came near to sacrilege to "invert a pious donation."

On the 15th of June, 1686, the Scottish Parliament passed an Act in favour of John Meikle, founder, granting him for nineteen years the privileges of a manufactory "for casting bells, cannon, and other such useful instruments."

While collecting materials to illustrate the history of St. Giles's Church, Dr. Laing met with the following singular contract, preserved in the archives of Edinburgh, for supplying it (St. Giles's) with a chime of bells in the year 1698.

"At Edinburgh, the eighteenth day of March, Im vje and ninty-eight years. It is agreed, contracted, and finally ended, betwixt the pairties following, to wit Sr Archibald Mure of Therutsune, Lord Provost of Edinburgh, William Menzei, Archibald Rule, George Mitchell, and James Nairne Baillies thereof, Patrick Halyburton, Dean of Guild, and Samuel McClellan Thesaurer of the same, Together with the remanent Council and deacons of Crafts, ordinar and extreordinar of the s<sup>d</sup> burgh for themselves, and as representing the whole body and community thereof

on the one pairt, and John Meikle, founder, burges of Edinburgh on the other pairt, In manner following, That is to say, fforasmuche as the said Lord Provost, Baillies and Council, having (conforme to their act of the date the eighteenth day of February last) approved of a Report of one Committee of their number anent an aggreement and communiing betwixt the Committee and the s<sup>d</sup> John Meikle for making a good and sufficient Cheme or Sett of Musicall Bells exactly tuned conforme to the rules of musick to be placed and fixed according to Arte upon the high Church Steeple of St. Geile's for the decorement of the City after the fashion and manner of other Cities abroad, which the said John Meikle did undertake to performe in manner mentioned in the s<sup>d</sup> Report, Therefore the sd John Meikle hereby binds and obliges himself, his heirs, exe<sup>ors</sup>, and successors whatsoever to make a good and sufficient Cheme or Sett of Musicall Bells according to the rules of musick for the use of the good town of Ed<sup>l</sup> consisting of fifteen in number and to be of different Notes of Musick rising or falling gradually according to the Scheme or Scale condescended on by the s<sup>d</sup> Committee and the s<sup>d</sup> John and subscribed by the Lord Provost and Magistrates and the s<sup>d</sup> John Meikle, So that the smallest or uppermost Bell of the highest note shall be C, and about six pound weight, and all the rest of the same Metall shall descend gradually to conforme to the said scheme, which tuning is to be determined or judged by Thomas Pringle wyter to the Signet Mr. George Barclay minister of the Gospell, Henry Crumbain and Francis Toward, Masters of Musick, after the Bells are finished, And binds and obliges him and his fors<sup>d</sup> to put the present Magistrats names and year of God on the largest Bell, All which the s<sup>d</sup> John Meikle binds and obliges him and his fors<sup>d</sup> to do and performe betwixt and the first day of July next, And that under the penalty of Ane hundred Pounds starling money. For the which causes the s<sup>d</sup> Lord Provost, Baillies and Council bind and oblige themselves and their Successors succeeding to them in their re<sup>x</sup>ive offices and places to content and pay to the s<sup>d</sup> John Meikle the sume of Seventy Two Shillings Scots for each pound weight of the s<sup>d</sup> Bells made in manner fors<sup>d</sup> And that immediately after the finishing thereof, Declaring allway as Lykewas it is hereby expressly declared with consent of both pairties, that in case the s<sup>d</sup> Bells be not exactly made and tuned in manner fors<sup>d</sup> then the s<sup>d</sup> Lord Provost, Baillies and Council are and shall in no manner of way (be) obliged to pay any money for the same, And for the more security both pairties are content and consent to the registration hereof in the Books of Council and Session or any others competent."

Then follow the signatures of the Prevost, Baillies, and all persons concerned in the contract. The document is endorsed "Contract and agreement betwixt the good town of Edinburgh and John Meikle, Chyme (chime) of bells. 1698."

A subsequent Act of Council, 1st September, 1699, records the satisfaction of the Council with the bells, and in consideration of Maister John Meikle having supplied six bells beyond his contract, and having been at the expense of repeated castings, whereby he was a loser, besides making two big bells, F and G sharp, the said John Meikle was paid 1,000 pounds (Scots). A discharge or receipt for this amount appears in the accounts of the City Treasurer, dated 5th July, 1700.



## CURIOSITIES OF COMMERCE AND TRADE.

### I.—THE EGG TRADE.

#### MULTIFORM USES OF EGGS.

ACCORDING to the proverb, an egg is full of meat; according to a recent decision by a country magistrate, there is no meat in it; and yet addled eggs may be condemned as unwholesome provisions. If some of the reason which, according to a second proverb, is needed for roasting eggs were used in legally defining them, it would make law look more commonsensical in the eyes of laymen.

At any rate, meat or no meat, eggs are extensively eaten; with the more gusto because a third proverb says,

"An egg, an apple, and a nut,  
You may eat after any slut."

Although this is a false security, since an eggshell is no armour of proof against impurity.

In "The Nonnes Preestes Tale," we read,

"Hire bord was served most with white and black,  
Milk and brown bred, in which she found no lack;  
Seinde [singed] bacon and sometimes an ey [egg] or twey."

Robert de Brunne tells us what eggs cost in his time:—

"An ay by it selue for fise schillynges was bouht.

Of the aforesaid roasting of eggs we hear nowadays a good deal more than we see, but "I have eggs on the spit," says one of Ben Jonson's characters.

According to Dr. Kitchiner, there were in his time six hundred and eighty-five French modes of dressing eggs, but the good doctor was of opinion that his half-dozen recipes were quite enough for English taste. These were to fry eggs with minced ham or bacon, to poach them with the same accompaniments, to boil them to be eaten from the shell, to poach them to be eaten by themselves—"The beauty of a poached egg is for the yolk to be seen *blushing* through the white, which should only be just sufficiently hardened to form a *transparent veil* for the egg," remarks the poetical gourmet, as if he were writing not of eggs but odalisques—to make a ragout of them with bacon, to fry them with bacon in slices, and to make savoury omelettes of them.

But what a meagre idea does this list give of the many parts which the egg plays in cookery. It figures in the Christmas pudding and the mince pie. To say nothing of the hosts of puddings, from the "Cottage" to the "Queen," of which eggs form an integral part, and the equally numerous pies and tarts whose crusts they glaze, here are *only a few* of the ways, jotted down at random, in which eggs appeal to the palate:—In plum-cake and its tribe of cousins, Bath-buns, tea-cakes, short-bread, simnel, ginger-cakes, Shrewsbury-cakes, ramakins, gooseberry, rhubarb, and apple fool, firmity, fritters, Brentford rolls, Cheshire puffs, German puffs, Damascus bis-

cuits, sponge-cake, custards, gingerbread, pancakes, lemon puffs, Jersey wonders, sweet omelettes, soufflés, creamless creams, ice creams, jellies, icing for cakes, Sally Lunn's, cheesecakes, candies, fruit-cheeses; with Spanish pea-soup, in almond-soup; as fish-sauce and fish-unguent, in minced crab, with lobster cutlets and fried oysters, in fish jelly, lobster salad, oyster sausages; in hare pie, rabbit fricassee, pigeon compote, mumbled rabbits; in veal olives, cold beef fricassee, lamb's brain cakes, broiled venison, roasted heart, veal cutlets, soused tripe; with cream as sauce for celery, in vegetable pudding, in salads—picturesquely contrasting with their fresh green and the purplish-crimson of the beet—with French beans *à la crème*, in stewed green-peas and herb pie, and poached on spinach.

As I have said before, these are only a few of the ways in which the egg finds its way to table. It commends itself also to us in beverages:—in ginger-beer, gingerade, mulled ale, crambambull, caudle, egg flip, egg nog, hot purl, Oxford nightcap, posset, beaten-up in tea, and as egg and sherry—by some highly praised as a restorative.

I believe that the egg has even found its way into the Pharmacopœia, under the disguise of *Mistura Spiritus Vini Gallici*,\*—in plain English, egg and brandy; and have heard that old ladies, able to afford the luxury of an indulgent doctor, are very fond of this *Mistura*. It does them *so* much good,—they must go on with it; and yet, somehow, it never enables them to do *quite* without medicine—*i.e.*, itself. Some other uses in medicine and surgery I have heard of, not forgetting "court-plaister."

Eggs are used as clarifiers both in cookery and manufactures, in which they are used for other purposes also. I took the liberty of applying to the Director of the Museum of Science, Edinburgh, for information as to the *principal* manufactures in which eggs are employed, and Professor Archer has been courteous enough to favour me with the following memorandum:—

"The white of eggs (albumen) is largely used, when dried, in calico printing.

"Albumenised paper is prepared from the fresh white of eggs.

"In Russia (Eastern) much dried egg albumen is prepared and exported, whilst from the yolks the oil is obtained from whence the celebrated but costly Kazan soup is made."

I might speak of cements and various other appliances in the mechanical arts, and in photography, but enough has been said about the uses of eggs.

#### ESTIMATE OF SUPPLY AND CONSUMPTION OF EGGS.

And now, whence do we get our eggs? There is,

\* *Mistura Spiritus Vini Gallici*. Take of spirit of French wine and cinnamon water, of each 4 ozs.; the yolks of two eggs; refined sugar ½ oz.



so to speak, no census taken of those of home production. Irish eggs are consigned to English dealers, and when British eggs are plentiful, some are sent to the London poultry, as they commonly are to country markets. But, as a rule, the metropolitan supply of home-laid eggs comes from higglers who drive about the country, buying of farmers and other poultry-

farmer), writes in reference to the number of eggs laid in the United Kingdom:—

"I should think if you were to estimate 300 hens for 1,000 acres, and put down as the average produce 200 eggs, you would not be very far off. Ducks need not be troubled about."

Let us work these figures.



keepers, and then consign direct to cheesemongers and buttermen, and any customers they may have for the article in town.

In the absence of certain figures, any computation of the number of home-laid eggs sold in the United Kingdom must, to a very considerable extent, be guess-work, but being anxious to give a tolerably probable approximate calculation, I applied to an eminent agricultural authority for information on the subject. After remarking that poultry is "as the small dust of the balance" in agriculture, Mr. James Howard, of Clapham Park, Beds (the well-known agricultural implement manufacturer and

Leaving out wastes, reclaimable or irreclaimable, and to avoid exaggeration using an old return, from which, of course, recent additions to the soil made use of by man in the United Kingdom are excluded, we may put down the pasture and arable land of England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland at 48,014,000 acres (eggs brought from the Channel Islands are included under the head of foreign).  $48,014, \text{ then, } \times 300 = 14,404,200 \text{ hens; } 14,404,200 \times 200 = 2,880,840,000 \text{ eggs.}$

But of these, to say nothing of eggs lost, addled, or otherwise not utilised, the quantity hatched is  $x$ , and the quantity eaten as eggs is  $y$ ; and so we get

the insoluble equation  $x+y=2,880,840,000$ . Besides, of  $y$  there is another unknown quantity  $z$ , the number of eggs eaten as eggs at home, instead of being sent to market.

The average number of plovers' eggs sent to London annually I have not been able to learn. Mr. Castang, purveyor of wild fowl to her Majesty, etc., tells me that the earliest of the season fetch very high prices. He has known three sell for eighteen-pence each.

The plover whose eggs are eaten in England—a dainty of which, from his references to it, the late Mr. Thackeray would seem to have been very fond—is the peewit or lapwing, deriving one name from its trick of pretending to be crippled, in order to lure intruders from its eggs or young (a dodge not confined to the lapwing), and the other from its cry. Its full complement of eggs is four, olive-coloured, dotted and blotched with black, and laid on the bare ground near water. We get our supplies from the English fens and Holland. Those who collect them take care not to carry off all four at once, in order to induce the mother bird to go on laying. The golden plover is the bird that is eaten. In the seventeenth year of Henry the Eighth's reign three dozen cost five shillings; three years later six dozen cost twelve shillings. In Edward the Fourth's reign, when the Archbishop of York was enthroned, four hundred plovers were devoured at the feast.

I endeavoured to ascertain the numbers or quantities of eggs of all kinds sold in the London poultry markets, but failed, being informed that all goods delivered at the Central were weighed, for the purposes of toll, in the bulk, without regard to the contents of the various packages; and that no record was kept at Leadenhall of the numbers or quantities of articles sold or exposed for sale there. A generation or so ago eggs, cheese, and butter—chiefly from Epping, or professing to hail thence—were commonly hawked by London streetsellers. Butter long ago disappeared from the list of London street wares; cheese lingered later in Rosemary Lane, but now that has disappeared also; a few "new-laid eggs" are still occasionally hawked from door to door, and sell best, I believe, when the vendor wears a Jim Crow hat, smock-frock, and buskins.

One of the most curious combinations of trades I know of may be seen in a shop near Leicester Square, which sells new-laid eggs and—pictures!

#### STATISTICS OF HOME AND FOREIGN SUPPLY.

Of foreign eggs, thanks to the Board of Trade returns which Mr. Giffen has been good enough to furnish me with, I can give minute and interesting figures.

In the nine months ending 30th September, 1879, there were imported into England 5,107,587 great hundreds of eggs (the great or long hundred is six score), value £1,816,434, as against, during the corresponding period of 1878, 5,117,094, value £1,958,604; and of 1877, 4,967,951, value £1,970,596. The imports for the September of the three years run thus:—

	Gt. Hundreds.	Value.
1877	420,846	£159,180
1878	438,902	£165,993
1879	418,357	£146,590

In 1878 we imported 6,530,956 great hundreds

of eggs; in 1877, 6,259,880; in 1876, 6,275,217; in 1875, 6,176,863; and in 1874, 5,671,269. The respective values were £2,511,096, £2,473,377, £2,620,396, £2,559,860, and £2,433,134.

Let the reader realise what those 6,530,956 great hundreds mean—783,714,720 eggs per annum, or considerably more than two millions a day.

From Denmark, in the year referred to, we took 218,011 great hundreds of eggs, value £67,654; from Germany, 1,523,219, value £438,968; from Holland, 361,448, value £142,213; from Belgium, 372,897, value £148,530; from France, 3,734,920, value £1,599,776; from Portugal, 56,381, value £18,082; from Spain, 150,180, value £49,473; from the Channel Islands, 83,683, value £35,247; and from other countries, 30,217, value £11,153.

Of these imported eggs there came to London, 1,289,521 great hundreds; to Liverpool, 52,188; to Bristol, 770; to Hull, 68,632; to Newcastle, 291,423; to Southampton, 1,740,346 (more than to London); to Dover, 58,468; to Folkestone, 80,003; to Newhaven, 403,939; to Goole, 21,436; to Grimsby, 437,838; to Hartlepool, 843,681; and to Rochester, including Queenborough, 345,234. In 1876 Swansea was one of the places into which eggs were imported. In 1878 Great Britain exported to all countries 1,902 great hundreds of foreign eggs, value £633. *Multa intransitum vestigia, pauca exeuntium.*

Like other trades, that in foreign eggs fluctuates, but in 1876 the importation showed an increase of 41 per cent on the trade in 1872, and was seven times what it had been in 1856. On the whole, the trade has been startlingly progressive, as may be seen from the following figures. In 1844, 67,000,000 foreign eggs were imported; in 1860, 160,000,000; in 1871, 380,668,000; in 1872, 531,591,720; in 1873, 660,474,000. In 1876 Hamburg sent us 171,301 cwt. of eggs, and in 1877, 213,397 cwt. As a local instance of the fluctuation of the trade I may mention that in 1875 Honfleur exported to England 19½ million dozens of eggs; in 1876, 16½; and in 1877, 11½ ditto. It may not be generally known that we get eggs as well as claret from the Gironde. In 1876 Bordeaux favoured us with £8,800 worth. Imported eggs are now duty free. In 1854 a duty of fourpence the cubic foot (about 200) was laid on those imported from British possessions; of eightpence on those from foreign possessions. In 1857 this duty produced £21,169.

#### EGG-DEALERS.

There are in London, I believe, some hundred egg-dealers, big and little. One of the largest of these is Mr. Auguste Le Mièrre, of Clerkenwell, who allowed me to visit his place of business, where I was favoured with some interesting information. In the warehouse, a low-pitched chamber with a pillar-propped ceiling and a boarded-off office, a million eggs might be stowed away. It held, when I was there, eggs from Ireland—5,000 in crates; and in cases with battens, instead of complete covers, nailed over their straw, cases holding 1,440 and 600 apiece, eggs from France, Spain, Italy, and Hungary. Irish eggs are said to be about the best eggs going, far better than French, than which they would command a higher price if they were only packed more carefully. Italian eggs are also preferred to French, and are rapidly bringing down French prices. Italy will soon have a place to herself in egg returns,

instead of being ranged with "other countries." The house of which I speak imports five or six hundred boxes of Italian eggs a week. Next year it will have large supplies from Canada, that vigorous child which, for a consideration, provides her mother with so large a proportion of her food—corn, beef, and mutton, dead and alive; ham, bacon, cheese, canned fish, fresh salmon, and now eggs. Spanish eggs are exposed to this disadvantage. If brought over in the same hold with oranges, they become impregnated with an orange scent and flavour, and thus are spoilt as eggs. Eggs should be kept to themselves in cloistral seclusion. The proverb about their immunity from impurity is, as I have already pointed out, a delusion and a snare; they imbibe foreign odours and savours with the greatest readiness. If the cases are made of green wood the eggs will be ruined, and the same fate awaits them if the straw in which they are packed is not perfectly dry. It will ferment and communicate its fusty smell to the eggs. At Mr. Le Mière's dépôt at Honfleur, the straw used for packing is turned over and over again in the sunshine, like mown grass meant for hay. This dépôt is supplied with eggs by poultry-breeders living within a radius of twenty miles round the town. At the dépôt the eggs are sorted into extra-large, large, middling, small, and dirties. Eggs sent on commission are sorted by the senders. They have their money forwarded to them every Thursday. Eggs from the Azores are not favourites in the market, on account of their small size.

Most of the eggs imported come in steamboats, either direct to London or else to the outports, from which they are hurried up to town by the London, Chatham, and Dover, South-Eastern, Brighton and South Coast, South-Western, and Great Western railways. But small sailing vessels are still used, especially in summer. Mr. Le Mière has one of thirty to forty tons, which plies between Honfleur and Shoreham. Some 300,000 eggs a week pass through his hands, that is, 15,600,000 a year. At the rate of 50,000 a day they are distributed in one and two-horse vans amongst the firm's customers, chiefly London porkmen, buttermen, and cheese-mongers. Very few are sent into the country, and none are sold to manufacturers.

## EGG SEASONS.

Spring is the busy time in the egg trade. Christmas, in spite of its puddings, does not appreciably stimulate the demand. When asked whether it is possible to hazard a "wide solution" of the question, How many eggs are used for puddings, etc., and how many eaten from the shell? the good-natured manager chuckles, and says that that is a riddle which passes his wit, and anybody else's, he thinks; that customers do not tell provision-dealers what they are going to do with the eggs they buy. The average wholesale buying price of eggs is from 7s. to 8s., the selling from 8s. to 11s. per hundred. Ducks' eggs are worth 1s. a hundred more than hens'. The egg hundred, it has been intimated, means 120.

Two millions and a half sterling per annum is a large sum to send out of the kingdom for eggs, especially since, if we liked, we need not spend a penny in this way. Poultry-breeding is strangely neglected in England. We go on growling at the high price of fowls and fresh eggs, and yet the remedy is in our own hands; and whilst the prices

were being brought down, we might eat our own fowls and eggs, and reap pretty little profits out of surplus stock.

## POULTRY-KEEPING.

A person interested in the subject has drawn up a balance-sheet, according to which a capital of £400 laid out on 100 hens, their housing, food, and other necessary expenses connected with them, would yield a return of £570,—i.e., £170 profit, in four broods of chickens at £125 per brood, and ten tons of dry dung at £7 per ton. Here is another of his calculations. Five hens would cost, say, 15s., their food for a year another 15s. During that time they would lay about 700 eggs, which, at 1s. a score, would yield 35s., or a profit of 5s. on 30s.—over 16 per cent.

And here is a third estimate. A man and his wife could take charge of 10,000 hens not for breeding, fatten and sell 3,000 every year, and buy the same number of young, which would begin in November, if hatched in the previous spring, to lay about four eggs a week each until next moulting. The hens' produce might be put down at from 120 to 150 eggs apiece per annum, which, at the rate of 30 a shilling, would yield a good profit.

It seems that when hens will not brood, capons and cocks can be induced to take their places as sitters; but cheaper than any animated hatcher is M. Carbonnier's incubator. In this eggs are laid on hay in a drawer placed under water raised to a temperature of 110° by a colza-oil lamp. This heat gives the eggs a temperature of 105° or 104°, and, like the warmth from the hen's breast, comes from above. All that has to be done is to keep the lamp burning, and to pull out the drawer twice in the twenty-four hours to turn the eggs, and to expose them for a quarter of an hour to the cooler outside air. The chick finds its way out of the shell unaided, is kept in the incubator for twenty-four hours after hatching, and is then admitted to a nursery provided with lambswool for the unfledged little thing to snuggle into when it feels cold. Forty eggs can be thus hatched at a cost, in winter, of 3s. 6d., in summer, of less than half that sum.

In some parts of France and Prussia poultry-keeping does not fall under the head of *petite culture*, but fowls and eggs are the chief products of the farm. In England, probably, the farmer will still for a long time continue to look upon poultry, in Mr. Howard's phrase, "as the small dust of the balance," as stock worthy of the attention of women and children only; although, perhaps, with foreign corn and foreign cattle, sheep, bacon, etc., lowering the price of his wheat, herds, flocks, and swine, he may at last come to take a less *de haut en bas* view of the matter. Even conservative farmers' thoughts can be widened by the process of the laws, which means, in their case, the rates of the market. Indeed, poultry-farms on a considerable scale have already been projected. Still, no doubt, for some years to come we must look to small breeders for an increase in the quantity of British fowls and eggs. And it is an industry well adapted to be carried on upon a small scale. Pottering after a few fowls is very much like play. If work it is to be called, it is labour lightened to almost imperceptible point by the interest which it excites. And poultry-keeping is within the reach of persons of very small means. If they have anything like a country run, fowls



will pick up a good bit of their food for themselves in the way of insects, worms, slugs, snails, and weeds. The scraps that fall from their master's table and the kitchen dresser, crusts of bread, surplus potatoes and other dinner vegetables, bits of fat and gristle, outside leaves and tops of cabbages and turnips, carrot and parsnip scrapings and parings, pea shucks, apple peel, etc., they greedily turn into plump flesh as white as cream and as delicious; and the meal or bran that has to be bought for them does not come to much.

According to the dealers, autumn is the cheapest time to buy live fowls of good character—*i.e.*, breeding. The beginner has plenty of breeds to choose from. There is the British breed, which still defies all comers to beat it in amount and toothsome-ness of flesh—the Dorkings, white, silver-grey, grey, speckled, and cuckoo, whose five toes have made their mark on British soil at least since the time of the Romans. The hens lay well, sit well, and carefully cater for their chicks; but they cannot bear to be cooped up in contracted quarters.

There are the French Dorkings, the Houdans, which also can boast of five toes and fine flesh, and have taken very kindly to our climate. This is more than can be said of *La Fleche* fowls, which appear to be too delicate to be acclimatised thoroughly, and, therefore, most British fowl-rearers can only hopelessly envy their big eggs and refinedly savoury meat. The touzle-headed *Crèvecoeurs*, on the other hand, belie their name. They do not break their hearts in exile, but readily become naturalised citizens of the English poultry-yard, thriving in it however small it may be. They do not sit, but they lay a great many huge eggs when other fowls are moulting, and they cut up splendidly upon the table.

The glossily handsome Spanish fowls resemble the *Crèvecoeurs* in their hardiness, the abundance and the size of their eggs, their readiness to learn to be content when deprived of the chance of gadding about, and also in their unwillingness to sit. Their slate-coloured cousins, the Andalusians, are also good layers. The Polands are other swell birds—golden and silver spangled, buff, white, and black, with white top-knots, but they are good layers as well. In looks they are run hard by the Hamburgs—black, gold, and silver spangled, and gold and silver

pencilled; but I am not aware that these fine feathers make them any finer birds for the roost or table than fowls of more homely plumage.

Game hens—another British breed—have something better than the bellicose temperament of their lords to be proud of. They are good layers, good mothers, good meat. They do not need to be coddled, and to them—

“Stone walls do not a prison make,  
Nor iron bars a cage.”

There is something ludicrous in the look of *Cochin Chinas*—buff, white, grouse, and black. Their bodies, like colts', seem to be on stilts. They stalk about awkwardly, like dismounted Lifeguardsmen in their big boots; and then the crow of the cocks is most laughable in its long drawn-out lugubriousness. But they are very valuable fowls, hardy, of an easy-going disposition, which enables them to lay on flesh rapidly, and content with a very small space to strut about in. The chicks give very little trouble, and the pullets begin to lay when they are little more than four months old. The eggs are numerous, and the *Cochin* hens are very good sitters. Their recently imported kinsfolk, the *Langshans*, are said to be better layers than the *Cochins*, and more delicate meat. As layers, sitters, and mothers, the hardy *Brahmas*—always in favour, and now in fashion again—cannot be surpassed. *Malays* also are hardy, capital layers, and excellent food. Finally, there are the *Bantams*, the pluckiest little animals in existence; the cocks making barnyard rivals of comparatively gigantic stature, turn tail before them. The hens are admirable sitters—on their own eggs or those of quails and partridges. Of *Bantams*, there are white, black, Japanese, game, gold and silver-laced *Sebright*, and the silky or negro, a comical little fowl with blue flesh and bones. In fowls, as in other things, fashion reigns. At one time, legs trousered with feathers down to the heel were thought beauties in *Bantams*, but now, I believe, they are considered a defect. The economical excellences of these “great minds in small bodies” are their motherly qualities, their tender chicken-like flesh, the abundance of their tiny dainty eggs, and the little it costs to keep the little creatures.

R. R.

## A CHAPTER ON BEARDS.

### II.

IF we have spoken of the beards of Shakespeare, we may, with equal admiration, speak of the beards of Vandyke. What a character they give to the various features of his magnificent canvases: the predominant characteristic is the peaked, or inverted beard, so remarkably illustrated in the several fine portraits of Charles I., and perhaps it is from these that we are reminded how frequently it seems to impart a melancholy dignity to the presence. In the time of Charles II came about an entire change. The Merry Monarch did not affect the beard, and indeed, “at length we find,” as Lord Lyttelton says in his letters, “that the persecuted beard, which has been the object of so much faithful veneration, finds in our quarter of the

globe, if we except the corner of European Turkey, its only asylum in the Capuchin cloister, unless we add the casual protection which is given to it by the fanatical Jew or mendicant hermit;” so that when beardless boys were spoken of in sundry anecdotes of which our readers have heard, the remark seems as applicable to beardless men. One anecdote in the autobiography of the venerated William Jay gives us, in fact, two anecdotes in one; he says: “Soon after I had begun my early career I went to supply for a Sabbath at Melksham. At this time was residing there an old gentleman from London, a very wise man, at least in his own conceit. I called upon him on the Monday morning. He received me rather uncourteously; he did not indeed censure my preach-

ing, but rudely said he had 'no notion of beardless boys being employed as preachers.' 'Pray, sir,' said I, 'does not Paul say to Timothy, Let no man despise thy youth? and, sir, you remind me of what I have read of a French monarch, who had received a young ambassador, and, complaining, said, Your master should not have sent me a beardless stripling! Sir, said the youthful ambassador, had my master supposed you wanted a beard, he would have sent you a goat!'"

This is rather different from the story which occurs in the life of the great and good John Wesley, to whom one day came a poor fellow, probably sensible enough in some particulars, but firmly impressed, like those Mohammedans and Rascalnikis, to whom we have referred, with the idea that no beardless chin could ever enter into the kingdom of heaven, and that therefore it was the duty of all saints to let their beards grow on earth. How it may fare with the women and children in the heavenly state, of course we, who have not adopted the hypochondriac's notion, cannot explain. Perhaps he thought that women ought also to adopt some expedients for the cultivation of the beard, until we might address them in the language of "Macbeth" to the rough-visaged ladies he met on the blasted heath, "You should be women, and yet your beards forbid me to interpret that you are so!" Be that as it may, this singular person came to Wesley in a state of great concern, saying, "Sir, you can have no place in heaven without a beard; therefore, I entreat you, let yours grow immediately." John was unimpressed, and still continued to shave. Southey wonders whether Wesley—mighty and marvellous economist of every moment of time as he was—if he had seen Thomas Campbell's calculation, to which we have referred, might not possibly have yielded to the persuasion and dispensed with the razor.

One of the most interesting, and even absorbing questions in tracing up the history of the beard is as to whether Adam was created with one, Van Helmont and other mystics asserting that it must have been conferred upon him as a mark of his degradation and a proof of his degeneration to a beastly body after the Fall. The question has been triumphantly asked, Could we endure to see an angel painted with a beard? Yet throughout the East, the beard, so far from being associated with degeneracy, was a singular mark for reverence and respect. There is more about the beard in the Bible than we can well introduce into this paper; indeed, the beards of the Bible would furnish a very interesting chapter in our history. Singular and illustrative is the story of the ambassadors of David to the court of Hanun, the king of Ammon. David's behaviour was a distinguishing proof of the gratitude and kindness of his disposition. Nahash, the old king of Ammon, died. "Then said David, I will show kindness unto Hanun, as his father showed kindness unto me; and he sent to comfort him by the hands of his servants. Then the princes of Ammon said unto Hanun their lord, Thinkest thou that David doth honour thy father, that he hath sent comforters unto thee? Rather he hath sent his servants to search the city, to spy it out and overthrow it. So Hanun took David's servants and shaved off the one-half of their beards, and cut off their garments in the middle, and sent them away." When David heard of it, he sent to meet them, for we are told the men were greatly ashamed. The object clearly was to make

them ridiculous and contemptible; and they were, no doubt, men of David's peerage, persons of great consideration. David felt the indignity, not only for himself, but, apparently, especially for them, for he sent out to meet them on their return, saying, "Tarry at Jericho till your beards be grown, and then return." And David's message may be regarded as almost proverbial, and has often occurred to us when we have seen the folly of youth aping and assuming the airs of high wisdom.

The circumstance, however, in itself, goes to show the singular estimation in which the beard was held throughout the East. To pluck the beard was a high indignity; to shave it was an indication of mourning, and no doubt the Spanish proverb reached Spain from its neighbourhood to the East, "Since we have lost our beards, we have lost our souls." Thus it is by a natural transition that from the beards of the Bible we come to the beard in church history, at which, indeed, we have glanced already.

Our readers do not need to be told what trifles frequently vexed the church during what have been called the "Ages of Faith." A short time since, our pages recited the story of the conflicts waged in the sacred war of the Wigs; not less agitating was the war of the Beards. Upon this interesting topic much might be written, and indeed, the grave question renewed itself intermittently from age to age, especially in the Western church. Various edicts went forth; sometimes the clergy were enjoined to wear the beard because a beardless chin was supposed to be the mark of effeminacy, and the beard well became the gravity of the ecclesiastical character. Then again, other edicts enjoined shaving, lest pride should, perchance, lurk behind the venerable beard.

Our readers have perhaps heard of Guillaume Duprat, the Bishop of Clermont. He assisted at the Council of Trent, and built the great college of the Jesuits in Paris; but what is pertinent to our story is that he was said to have the finest beard ever seen. We are afraid he was proud of it; indeed, it was thought so; it was judged to be far too fine a beard for a bishop. A special chapter of his cathedral—the canons in full force—sembled, and they came to the unanimous resolution that they would shave him. Sure enough, the next time that he appeared at the cathedral, as he entered the choir, the dean, the prévôt, and the whole chapter approached with scissors and razor, soap, basin, and warm water. Somehow, the bishop escaped. He took to his heels, fled to his castle of Beauregard, about two miles from Clermont, where he fell sick, and died of vexation, it is said, at the indignity offered to his beard.

The question of the sanctity of the beard, like some other theologic questions, is still an undecided one. Do not our readers remember how high the conflict raged between the Eastern and the Western churches? Gibbon has recited the story in his splendid and sarcastic language, but he might have told us how the beard also became one of the symbols of the controversy; how, as might be supposed, the Eastern church comprised the sticklers for the ancient ornament, while the Western went off, for the most part, into the opposite extreme. Still, as the Bishop of Clermont illustrates, many high dignitaries, bishops and cardinals, assumed the beard, and, in the unhappy period of our own church troubles in the reign of Queen Mary, both the cruel Gardiner and the mild and more wary Cardinal Pole, were possessed of remarkable beards.

We have only been able to glean a little in this extensive field, or, if these columns permitted, many stories might yet be told, and many references made; and we have a sense that we have slurred too slightly the importance attaching to Oriental beards, especially the beards of Persia and Asia in general. And what a beard was that of John Mayo, called John the Bearded, a great German painter. He was a tall man, but his beard swept the ground when he stood upright, and, lest it should entangle his steps, he wore it fastened to his girdle. We do not wonder when we read that Charles V, the Emperor of Germany, delighted to gaze on this extraordinary beard when unfastened, and to see it blowing in the faces of the lords of his court.

Two of the very greatest men who have ever adorned our nation have died upon the scaffold, and both of them have furnished anecdotes showing that they set some value upon their beards. There was the illustrious Sir Thomas More; when he laid his head on the block, he perceived that his beard was likely to be hurt by the axe of the executioner, so he recovered it, observing he supposed "it had not offended the king, or been guilty of high treason, and that it would be an injustice to punish it." And when Sir Walter Raleigh came to the same end, he also demurred to the possible injury his beard might sustain in the beheading, saying, "there was a controversy going on by the king against his beard, which was undecided as yet." Some severe judges have spoken rather ungraciously of this ruling passion of gaiety and wit manifesting itself even in the immediate presence of death, to which it may be replied that both of the men died as they had lived. They had armed themselves beforehand against the fear of death, and these singular expressions of cheerfulness in their last moments, we know, were no illustrations of a reckless spirit, but of a serene and settled faith.

In recent times the curious question of *capillary* attraction has become a vexed question again with us in the annals of capricious fashion. When we, who are now the oldest inhabitants of this kingdom, were boys, a beard was a rare sight; the man who possessed one was sure to win a second glance from us, as somewhat of a curiosity in his way. Travellers to foreign countries, sailors, and others, sometimes brought back this appendage with them, which in those days was regarded as rather savage, creating in childish minds very usually a sense of awe, perhaps of fear. We remember to have heard the story of a little girl whose uncle had been long absent, and when he was introduced into the family on his return to England, the little lady shrunk back from the face which she beheld "bearded like the pard;" and when her mother said to her, "Why don't you kiss your uncle, my dear?" the little timid frightened mortal said, "I don't see any place, mamma!" Those were the piping times of peace during which our fathers had beaten their swords into razors. Since then the beard has come back again, and with it, as it has been said, we have beaten our razors into swords. As usual, we have, no doubt, followed our French neighbours in the adoption of their fashion; it has been said that these, in turn, adopted the fashion from their intimate relations with Africa, and that thus France has not made a greater impression on Africa, from its point of contact at Algiers, than Africa has made on France, and through France on England; so that now, in place of the clean physiog-

nomies of our predecessors, when we behold a mass of our fellow-citizens approaching us, it is like "Burnam Wood coming to Dunsinane."

We must not enter into the question of the alleged relation of the beard to health; only, it may be supposed that so natural a growth cannot be without its purpose in divine uses; it is alleged to be a fine adjunct of respiration, and a grand security for precarious constitutions. It is said to protect the throat, as the moustache is said to protect the lips, and the advantages of both are alleged as important means for decreasing bronchial affections; but we are not medical, and shall leave to some more capable pen the discussion of a subject which is certainly worthy of more than a passing consideration. In our day we do not remember that we possess any delineators of the English face divine, who, like Shakespeare, or old Taylor, may be referred to, in times to come, for their catalogues of the English beards in the nineteenth century; yet, still now, they are as various as they are numerous, did we possess the pen which could elegantly describe them, or the wit which could hang its pungent jokes upon them. But this is altogether too delicate a ground for us to venture upon; and, lest it should seem, in our attempt to bring out their several idiosyncrasies, that we are plucking some reader by the beard, we close here our remarks on this assuredly most ancient and honourable distinction, or our paper may become as long as the beard of John Mayo of bearded memory.

#### MARKETING ON LAKE NYASSA.

OUR larder was empty, the last "patata" had disappeared; for several days our five black servants had been subsisting on a bag of wheat, previously ravaged by weevils. With Christmas at the door, things looked desperate, when Cotterill proposed a cruise in the steel boat to try our luck in the villages of Cassanga and Namkumba. We took with us a companion, and started on the Friday before Christmas, 1876, with five rowers, and the little wind there was in our favour. But progress was slow; no awning; a red-hot day. I had visited Cassanga some ten days before in company with Dr. Black, so went into the bows to pilot, while Cotterill stuck to the helm. I was the best off, as I got into the shadow of the foresail and went to sleep. We ran straight across the bay, and when near the shore I was awakened to point out the place. Crushing through masses of reeds, I steered the boat straight into the little sandy cove, more by good luck than good management.

The large white sails had attracted attention, and several natives were waiting for us. Taking one as a guide, Bismarki, surnamed "The Prince," being interpreter, we made for the chief. He received us in a large square house, but after producing a mat, on which we threw ourselves down in the shade, he left us. Being very thirsty, we soon became impatient, and wondered if he ever intended to return, and whether he intended to treat us to pombi (a native drink), as on a former occasion. A door behind us opened, Cassanga's head popped out, beckoning us to follow, and he led us to his private residence, a large beehive hut, neatly plastered. Here a mat was spread out under the verandah, covered with a cloth



of foreign manufacture—Portuguese, most likely—and a jar of pombi, with a glass tumbler, was produced. Cotterill said he hoped we should be good friends; he had come into the country to trade—not in slaves, but in ivory and skins. We got the usual nodding and guttural "Eah, eah!" and we told him we had brought a present—some powder (wonga)—had he anything to put it in? With a broad grin on his countenance he dived into his hut, bringing forth a huge powder-horn, made out of a large buck's horn, spacious enough to represent the Horn of Plenty, and held it with both hands. It is etiquette here, both in giving and receiving, to use both hands; women always kneel at the same time. Half a pound of powder was poured in, besides which we gave him two pounds of red beads. The fashionable beads are small, opaque rose, light or dark blue, and the mangasi (bright red, with white eyes). White calico is, however, the money current just now, coloured material or beads not cared for.

After due rest we broached the malonda question (buying food), but soon saw we should get very little, they were wanting themselves. After some trouble we got a fowl, with a little mapira (Kafir corn) for the men's dinner, bade good-bye, and returned to the boat, where Susi was busy preparing kudia. The afternoon breeze blowing rather stiff prevented us from visiting other villages. Such a heavy surf broke on the sandy beach, that we had to keep the boat clear from the shore, and drive along, telling the crowds of natives that flocked down to see us to get things ready for sale by the morrow. Landing at Namkumba's, the tents, goods, etc., were tumbled out on to the beach under great difficulties; then I sheered off, anchoring about two hundred yards from the shore in one fathom water. After spreading the awning and making everything snug for the night, I went ashore in the dingy, where many willing hands hauled me through the surf without a spill. We had supper by the light of the moon—plenty of fresh sweet potatoes and curried fowls, an admiring circle of natives criticising us. I preferred sleeping afloat—no mosquitoes, no ants; so, taking my man Mankokwe along with me in the dingy, I left my companions round a cosy fire admiring the heavens. All the constellations are upside down, consequently hard to read. Orion's Belt is very conspicuous; Southern Cross does not rise till early morning.

I was just falling asleep, when bump, bump! the dingy was trying to knock a hole through our sides. There was no help but to hoist it on board, so I roused Mankokwe, and we lifted her on board. Then she began to roll so much that I could not keep in bed, but kept continually rolling out; so I got up again, and lowered the gaff and sail, which eased her a great deal, and I passed a very comfortable night. The wind fell as usual at ten o'clock, and the waves soon went down. Awakened at four by a cock we had on board, who persisted in crowing an answer to his brethren on shore, and not feeling inclined to get up quite so early, I told Mankokwe to seize the vagabond and scare him at every attempt to crow. This effectually stopped him.

On landing, after a good swim, I find my friends in sorry plight for the day's work, being nearly chawed up by mosquitoes. We pay the great Namkumba a visit, he actually shakes hands with us of his own accord; he has learnt that much. We present him with powder and lead; he promises to send down his men with food for sale. On asking

him if there are any bucks about Nyassa, he shakes his head, "Iai, iai!" so this part of the country seems destitute of game. A tree in front of the tents swarms with a colony of doves; half-a-dozen furnish an excellent breakfast. Buying becomes brisk; our calico disappears with amazing rapidity. Quantities of sweet potatoes and fowls arrive, and a present of a large dish of cleaned mapira from the chief, a sign that none will come for sale. He appears himself, so taking a couple of men I bring the boat in for his special inspection. The thin sides were a perfect marvel to him, and all "chisulu" (iron). He went as far as touching, but nothing would persuade him to get on board. A few months before, when the steamer visited the place, he would neither come down to the beach nor receive the visit of Mr. Young.

Everything bought up, we left at eleven with a heavy head-wind and a threatening thunder-storm to contend with. We weathered the first point with some difficulty; our five rowers were totally incompetent to force the big boat against wind and sea, so, to prevent going ashore, there was nothing for it but to anchor. We paid out all the chain, got the dingy on board, and, trying to make the best of it, hoped the wind would go down, but it doubled in fury. The boat soon became a regular see-saw, and the crew, sea-sick and scattered, looked the very picture of woe. To make matters worse, the mountains disappeared, and it looked like rain, but I dare not spread the awning, for the strain on the anchor was already too great, and I was afraid of it dragging on the sandy bottom. A monstrous wave breaking over the bows, deluging everything, brought the black fellows to their feet in double quick time. I was beginning to feel very hungry. We had no wood on board to cook; nothing of course ready; my companions were both squeamish, when a canoe put out to sea amidst all the wind and turmoil. Managed by four men standing up, it was one moment up in the skies, the next deep down out of sight. Very few English sailors would care to come out in such a rickety old canoe in such weather. Although they were going out to sea, we felt sure that our boat was the object of their trip, and so it proved. They went far out, and then dropped down to us, keeping the canoe head to wind all the time. At first we thought they were bringing things for sale, and were remarking how hard-up for calico they must be to come out in such weather. On Susi calling out to them to keep off (we wanted no collision in a sea like this), they showed us a creek to leeward, and talked of a river with deep water, and shelter. We were certainly rather surprised at this show of seamanship; it looked very like coming out to a vessel in distress. To get into quiet water, with the chance of landing, was worth trying for; so, thanking the canoe, we commenced hauling in the anchor. Now came the question whether we could reach the creek before we were driven ashore.

Looking round for more definite instructions, the canoe had vanished. As a last resource I hoisted the foresail and stood boldly in for an opening in the reeds. The pressure on the sail made the boat almost leap out of the water, to the terror of our crew; just clearing the corner we were in calm water, but no river. I let go the anchor to prevent going on shore too hard, as the natives do not quite understand backing water yet. But it was too late, we ran into the grass, only to find it was the river after all,

covered with a luxuriant growth of water-lilies, grass, etc., while on our right a small lagoon, with reeds, revealed the canoe nicely ensconced among them. Hoisting anchor through the tangled vegetation caused no end of trouble; but at last we ran in beside the canoe, and were right glad to set foot on *terra firma* again. After distributing a handful of beads each to the four boys who came out to us, Bismarki and Susi were ordered to prepare dinner at once. Choosing a shady spot below a fine spreading tree, the ground-sheet was spread out near a tall reed palisade and close to a circle of huts. This spot proved to be the village trysting-place from the numerous remains of small fires, and from the tree being supported on sticks to make it spread out. A small crowd soon gathered round us, squatting on their hams to admire the strangers.

Taking a ramble while dinner was preparing, I entered the village to find it almost deserted. All the people are engaged in the fields at this season. The houses are all circular, with tall, conical roofs; projecting at least a couple of feet is a sort of verandah, where the inhabitants enjoy their afternoon siesta or retire during a shower. The inside of the hut is in perpetual darkness; the door, the only opening, is usually made as small as possible. The household gods are few—a wooden mortar for shelling grain, a large stone (granite) for grinding, and a few black earthenware (globular) pots, with a mat neatly woven out of split reeds. I soon found that my walk would be limited to a narrow strip of land parallel with the sea—a raised beach, in fact; on one side the waves breaking in huge masses, on the other a deep marsh thigh deep. I wandered along the narrow strip, sometimes down by the marsh, where there was no wind, but a humid heat; and sometimes along the beach, where a strong breeze was blowing, and it was quite cool. There were no flowers, no birds, no insects; nothing living but a stray dog or two, which would jump up and bolt, so frightened not able to bark, as if I were some wild beast. The village appeared to be interminable. I was hungry, so after a couple of miles returned, first along the marsh till I was nearly melting, then along the beach till I was frozen, the change being very agreeable.

Dinner served, Bismarki told the crowd that the "English" objected to be watched while eating. They instantly got up; one and all left. After dinner marketing commenced in earnest again. One huge fellow, with his hair done up in big sausages and pig-tails, did all the bartering for the women, who, staying behind the palisade, watched their interests through various chinks. They sometimes wanted nkanda (beads) and made a great noise if we gave too few. The moment a bargain was concluded a black hand appeared over the wall to receive the beads. The badgering and bartering was fearful; they always want "Ngono, ngono" (a little more). Some put on a very lachrymose face, opened their hands in an appealing manner, and muttered, "Chai, chai" (bad).

Another branch of trade prospered amazingly—the supply of insects was incessant. One man brought a handful of grasshoppers, most of them without legs; others had beetles, knowing that I gave thread, needles, or beads for them, but mostly worthless, having lost a leg or antennæ. The natives imagine we eat them, that, therefore, a leg more or less is of no account, and the larger the

better. Some of them go the length of calling beetles "Engleeze nyama" (meat). One old man got quite indignant because I refused him a needle for a handful of butterflies, chiefly minus a wing or two. So engrossed were we with our purchases, that not until we came to the last piece of calico did we look to the weather. The wind had fallen; the appearance of good weather, besides the moonlight, tempted us to try for home instead of returning to Cassanga's, where we should have had to remain the night and return on Sunday morning. There was a hurry and bustle to get on board: first one not to be found, then another missing; a man rushing frantically down with a fowl for sale, another waiting till the last moment to sell six potatoes.

We got clear at last, the whole crowd shoving off. A fine picture, all the dark figures among the reeds, and the big boat, with its white sails, gliding slowly out, towing the dingy alongside. It was a stiff job getting back across the bay, against wind and waves, the poor fellows rowing hard for four hours. One of my companions was compelled to part company with his dinner. The moment we landed the fowls had to be seen after. Some were dead and a number dying. The mission gladly took twenty from us, but oh! the trouble of counting them in the bunches, not to speak of the cackling; they would not keep quiet. Altogether it had been an agreeable as well as profitable trip. The total amount bought was fifty fowls, 520lb. of potatoes, of which the mission took 368lb., and 25lb. of mapira, all of which we kept. With one of the fowls we got eight eggs; had them for tea; they were *all good*. Eggs are about the worst speculation you can invest in here, ten to one they have been sat upon a few weeks. I wonder if you have gone twenty miles for your Christmas dinner?

F. SIMONS, C.E.



### The Nettle.

It thrives in meadows where the daisies grow,  
In woodland depths where slanting sunbeams fall,  
In the grand lordly park and paddock small;  
'Neath hawthorns where the children maying go,  
On sunny slopes where summer flowerets blow.  
It flaunts itself upon the garden wall;  
By quiet footpaths, in old hedgerows tall,  
And ways were busy feet pass to and fro.  
Evil and good mingle mysteriously;  
There is a taint upon all mortal joy;  
Sunshine and shadow, gold with base alloy;  
It must be so, it is Heaven's high decree.  
Unmingled good: oh, aspiration vain!  
Where pleasure blooms, there grows the nettle  
pain.

JOHN ASKHAM.